



Land Use Annual Report 2009

Prepared By
St. Louis County Planning and Development

About the Report

The report provides an overview of residential and commercial land use activity by areas that are administered by St. Louis County. The report highlights permit type, variances, conditional use permits, plats, rezonings, land use plans, and others related to both lakeshore and non-lakeshore areas.

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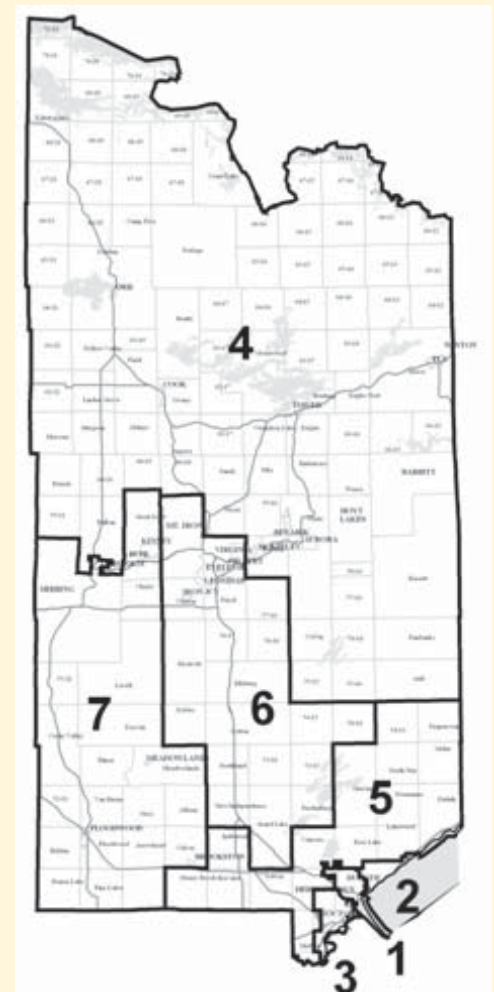




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A Message From the Planning and Development Department

Thank you for investing in St. Louis County and making it your place to live, work, play, and relax.

It is the goal of the Planning and Development Department to serve the public with the highest level of service and professionalism. Our role is to conduct land use permitting, assist communities in long-range planning efforts, maintain zoning regulations, improve communities infrastructure, and assist in other county goals.

St. Louis County is the largest county jurisdiction east of the Mississippi River, with over 6,860 square miles of scattered cities, lakes, resorts, and wilderness. The county has over 1,000 lakes, over 100 jurisdictions, thousands of miles of trails, and hundreds of parks that provide recreational opportunities to both residents and visitors.

With increasing use of technology, the Planning and Development Department continually improves communication efforts and streamlines the permitting process to assist property owners in getting projects started in a timely manner. We strive to be accessible, and to provide quick and reliable information.

In order to help residents further improve or develop both residential and commercial property, the Planning and Development Department has developed a series of print and web publications and applications to help guide project planning.

These print and web publications and applications can be accessed through the Planning and Development Department's website, by calling us for assistance, or visiting one of our offices.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hayden
St. Louis County Planning and Development Director

County Web-Site
www.co.st-louis.mn.us
Email Questions to: planninginfo@co.st-louis.mn.us

Land Use Administration

Land Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

The Land Use Division

The St. Louis County Planning and Development Department's Land Use Division has two main functions:

1. Administer and enforce land use zoning regulations and associated permit requirements;
2. Work with other county departments and jurisdictions to conduct planning studies and analyses.

The goal of the Land Use Division is to streamline regulatory activities to be more "customer friendly" without sacrificing land use integrity. The Planning and Development Department has offices in Duluth and Virginia.

Duties of the Land Use Division

- Review development proposals
- Review, approve and enforce zoning
- Make recommendations to the County Board on land use plans, rezonings, and amendments to ordinances
- Review subdivision plats
- Issue land use permits
- Conduct environmental review
- Assist with county water planning
- Provide staffing for Planning Commission (PC) and Board of Adjustment (BOA)
- Guide land use planning process
- Coordinate inter-agency/inter-jurisdictional planning activity
- Administer wetland and shoreland regulations

St. Louis County's Zoning Ordinance

The St. Louis County Zoning Ordinance establishes a comprehensive land use regulation for that portion of St. Louis County outside the



incorporated limits of municipalities to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of residents and visitors.

The county is divided into land use zones. In each zone there are regulations for permitted uses of land and the placement of all structures. The county must also adhere to various federal and state laws.

The regulations are intended to encourage the most appropriate use of land in the county and to recognize and preserve the economic and environmental values of all lands within the county.

Land use regulations strive to balance the protection of natural resources, provide opportunities for economic growth, guard private property owner rights, and encourage the most appropriate use of the land.

Ordinances, Statutes, Plans Enforced by St. Louis County Planning and Development Department

St. Louis County	Adopted	Amended
Zoning Ordinance #46	February 16, 1993	August 16, 1993 March 23, 1998 November 1, 2000 July 1, 2003 December 14, 2007 July 1, 2009
Comprehensive Land Use Plan Ordinance #27	December 27, 1977	
Subdivision Regulations Ordinance #33	July 13, 1993	December 7, 2007
Floodplain Management Ordinance #43	February 19, 1992	
Comprehensive Wetland Protection and Management Plan	March 9, 1999	

Land Use Administration

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

Ordinances, Statutes, and Plans




The St. Louis County Planning and Development Department's Land Use Division administers state, federal and local regulations pertaining to land use.

Administration of Zoning

The St. Louis County Planning and Development Department administers zoning regulations in areas listed below.

Cities and some townships in St. Louis County administer their own zoning.

Administration of Zoning St. Louis County 2009

-  Cities that administer their own zoning
-  Townships that administer their own zoning
-  Townships administered by St. Louis County



Cities and Townships That Administer Their Own Zoning

Cities	Phone	Web Site
Aurora	(218) 749-2912	www.ci.aurora.mn.us
Babbitt	(218) 827-2188	www.babbitt-mn.com
Biwabik	(218) 865-4183	www.cityofbiwabik.com
Brookston	(218) 453-5541	na
Buhl	(218) 258-3226	na
Chisholm	(218) 254-7900	www.chisholm.govoffice.com
Cook	(218) 666-2200	www.cookmn.us
Duluth	(218) 723-3305	www.duluthmn.gov
Ely	(218) 365-3224	www.elyminnesota.com
Eveleth	(218) 744-2501	www.evelethmn.com
Floodwood	(218) 476-2751	www.floodwood.govoffice.com
Gilbert	(218) 748-2232	www.gilbertmn.org
Hermantown	(218) 729-3600	www.hermantownmn.com
Hibbing	(218) 262-3486	www.hibbing.mn.us
Hoyt Lakes	(218) 225-2344	www.hoytlakes.com
Iron Junction	(218) 744-4389	na
Kinney	(218) 258-3836	na
Leonidas	(218) 744-1574	na
McKinley	(218) 749-5313	na
Meadowlands	(218) 427-2565	na
Mountain Iron	(218) 735-8446	www.mtniron.com
Orr	(218) 757-3288	www.orrnm.com
Proctor	(218) 624-4055	www.ci.proctor.mn.us
Tower	(218) 753-4070	www.cityoftower.com
Virginia	(218) 748-7500	www.virginiamn.us
Winton	(218) 365-5941	na

Townships

Canosia	(218) 721-4944	www.canosiatownship.qwestoffice.net
Duluth Twp.	(218) 393-8500	www.duluthtownship.org
Gnesen	(218) 721-5433	na
Greenwood	(218) 290-1132	www.greenwoodtownshipmn.com
Lakewood	(218) 728-1015	na
Midway	(218) 726-2479	na
Rice Lake	(218) 721-5001	www.ricelaketownshipmn.org

All Other Areas

St. Louis County	(218) 725-5000	www.co.st-louis.mn.us
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Land Use Administration

Land Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

■ What is a Comprehensive Land Use Plan

St. Louis County have developed and updated a comprehensive land use plan and townships across the county have also developed plans for their particular areas.

The purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to provide a coordinated set of guidelines for decision-making to guide the future growth and development of an area. After these guidelines and policies are set, a zoning map is developed and maintained by St. Louis County.

Comprehensive plans can address many areas of concern by residents such as: land use, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open space, agriculture, timber production, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses to accommodate future growth.

Comprehensive plans must include provisions to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater that is used for public water supplies. The plan must also address surface water, including drainage, flooding and storm water run-off.

Land use plans are the compilation of community ideas by all stakeholders including citizens and key decision makers. Plans often evolve over many months, or even years, of discussion, thought, input, debate, examination and study.

The final plan reflects community agreement about land uses and is implemented through zoning ordinances.



Land Use Administration

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

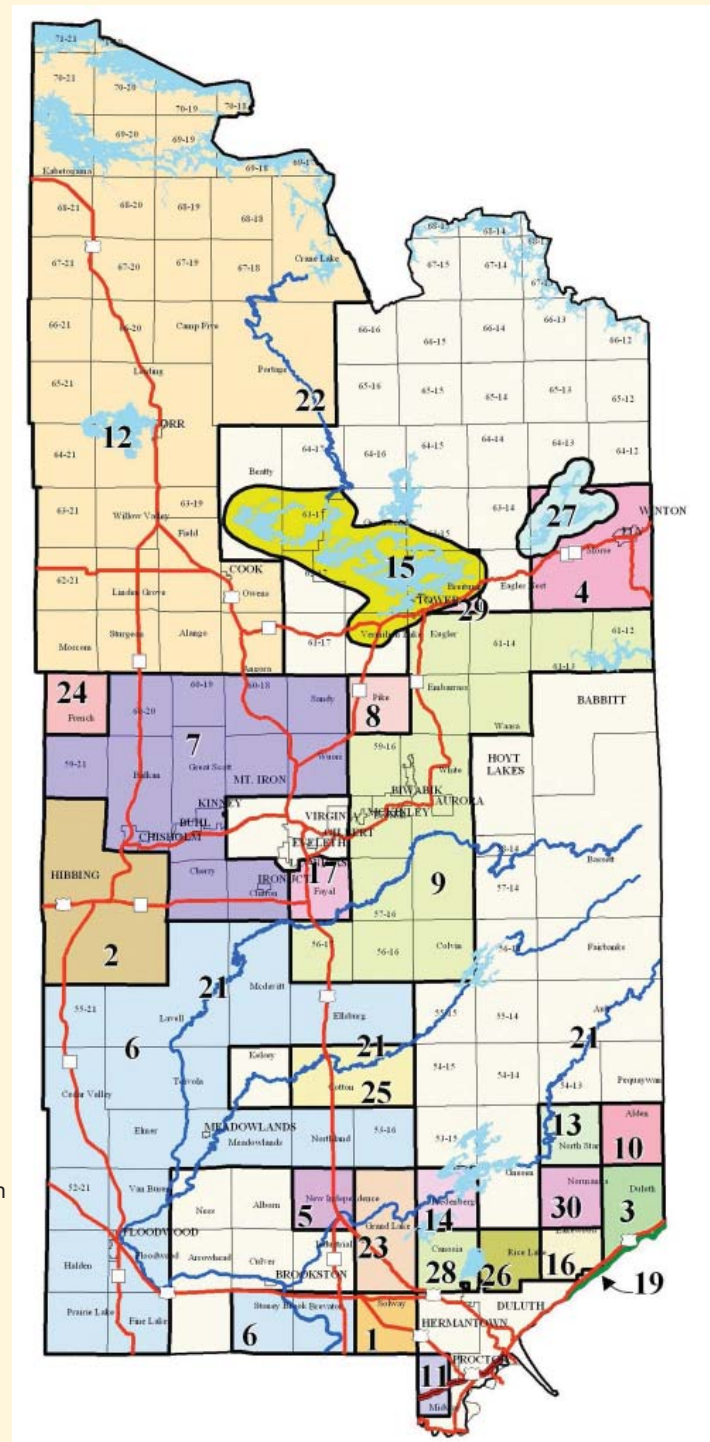
Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

Comprehensive Plans St. Louis County 2009

Land Use Plans and Their Effective Dates

Section 1	Town of Solway January 6, 1978 March 13, 2001	Section 16	Town of Lakewood October 22, 1985
Section 2	Town of Stuntz June 12, 1978	Section 17	Town of Fayal December 2, 1985 September, 2002
Section 3	Town of Duluth January 29, 1979	Section 18	Houseboat Goals and Policies May 26, 1987
Section 4	Town of Morse February 1, 1979	Section 19	North Shore Management Plan April 24, 1990
Section 5	Town of New Independence April 1, 1979	Section 20	St. Louis County Water Plan July 1, 2001
Section 6	Southwest Planning Area September 1, 1980	Section 21	St. Louis, Cloquet, Whiteface Corridor Management Plan April 5, 1994
Section 7	West Range Planning Area October 6, 1980	Section 22	Vermilion River Plan August 15, 1995
Section 8	Town of Pike September 14, 1981	Section 23	Grand Lake Plan May 9, 2000
Section 9	East Range Plan October 26, 1981	Section 24	French Plan May 23, 2000
Section 10	Town of Alden March 22, 1982	Section 25	Cotton Plan April 10, 2001
Section 11	Town of Midway April 12, 1982	Section 26	Rice Lake Plan November 20, 2001
Section 13	Town of North Star March 14, 1983	Section 27	Burntside Lake Land Use Plan September 1, 2001
Section 14	Town of Fredenberg December 10, 1984	Section 29	Breitung Land Use Plan March 15, 2003
Section 15	Lake Vermilion Land Use Plan July 1, 2009	Section 30	Normanna Township Plan July 1, 2003



Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

About Land Use Permits

The St. Louis County Planning and Development Department regulates land use to encourage the most appropriate use of property while preserving economic and environmental value. To accomplish this task, the Planning and Development Department requires land use permits for:

- Homes/cabins, additions, accessory buildings (garages, sheds, gazebos, screenhouses, saunas, boathouses, and storage buildings), borrow pits, commercial uses, decks, industrial uses, change in use, land alterations to shoreland, home-based businesses, junk/salvage yards, mobile homes, replacing of one structure with another, remodeling, signs, bunkhouses and other special situations
- Review subdivision plats

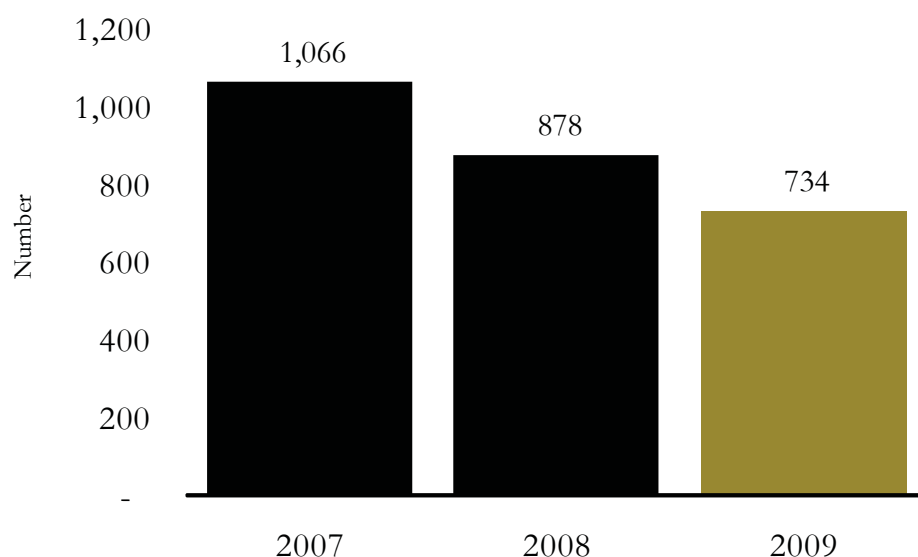
Total Permit Activity

In 2009, there were a total of 734 approved land use permits, variance applications (Planning and Development Department only), and Planning Commission applications.

Land use permit activity decreased 30.8% from 924 in 2007 to 639 in 2009. Variance applications (Planning and Development Department only) decreased 48.8% from 86 in 2007 to 44 in 2009. Planning Commission applications decreased 8.9% from 56 in 2007 to 51 in 2009.

Total Permit Activity 2007-2009

Approved Land Use Permits, Variances, & Planning Commission Applications



Land Use Permit by Type 2009

	2007	2008	2009	
			#	% Change 07-09
Land Use Permits	924	802	639	-30.8
Variances (Planning Dept Only)	86	37	44	-48.8
Planning Commission Applications	56	39	51	- 8.9
Total All Permits	1,066	878	734	-31.1

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

1 This excludes variance and Planning Commission cases, land use permit applications denied, pending, voided, and withdrawn.

2 This includes conditional use permits, rezonings

Permit Summary

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

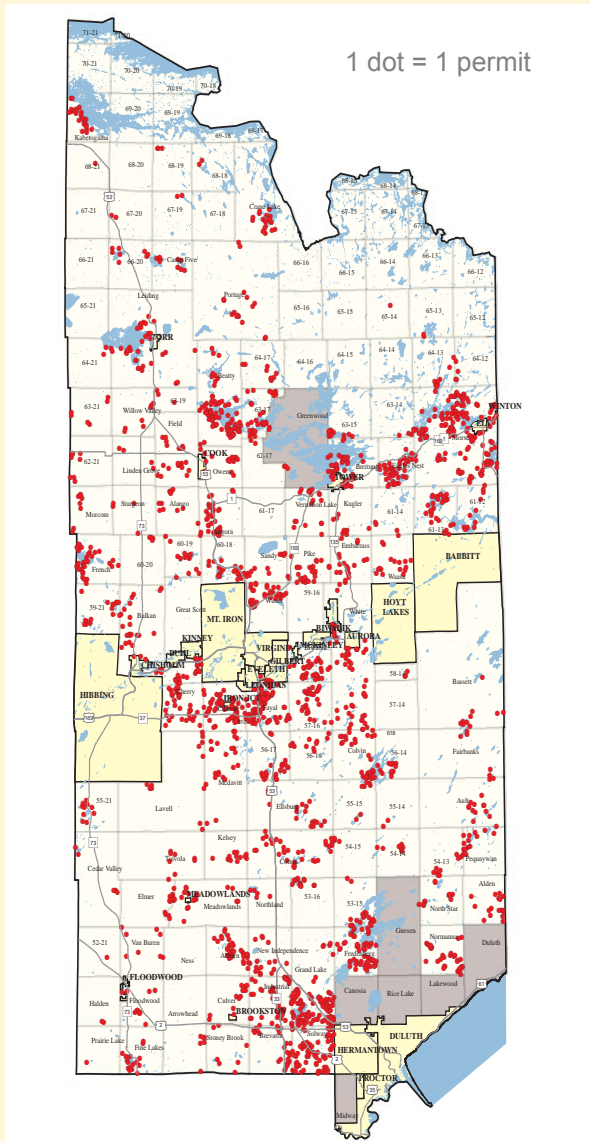
■ Permit Activity: Dot Maps

The following maps show permit activity by location across St. Louis County and are intended to portray potential trends and hot spots. One dot equals one permit.

The data includes all the permit activity within the jurisdictions of St. Louis County and excludes any township that administers its own zoning.

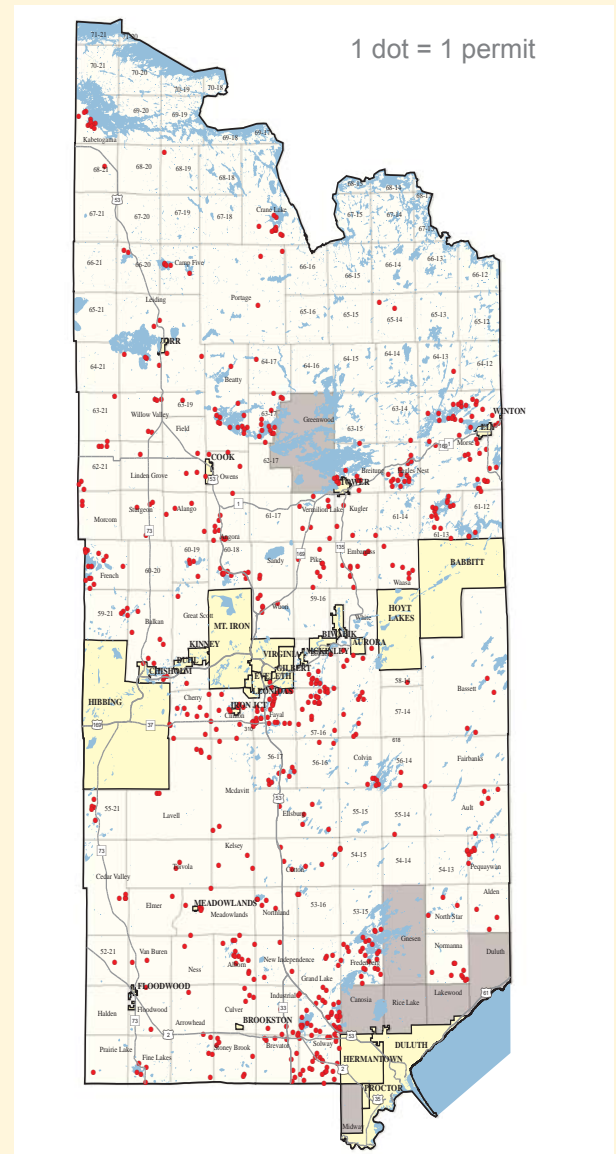
Both maps show higher levels of permit activity in the lake regions and rural areas of the county. The rural areas include townships and cities that are considered suburb areas of Duluth.

2007-2009 Land Use Permit Activity



Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

2009 Land Use Permit Activity All Participating Communities in Permit System



Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Note: Data extracted from the Minnesota Counties Information System (MCIS) and participating cities.

Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

■ Permits By Month

Land use permit applications were received throughout 2009. The removal of road restriction in the spring marks the beginning of the construction season and there is a significant increase in the number of permit applications at that time.

Historically, the peak of the land use permit season is in August, while the low is in December. In 2009, the peak number of applications reviewed and approved was in June, and January had the lowest activity.

■ Land Use Permits by Type

In 2009, by category, the highest number of land use permits approved by type was accessory buildings with 301 permits, followed by single-family dwellings with 165 permits, and dwelling additions with 84 permits.

In 2009, the highest number of approved permits within each type was 159 permits for accessory buildings greater than 800 square feet, 139 permits for single-family dwellings with over 600 square feet, 131 permits for accessory building structures between 100 and 800 square feet, and 84 permits for dwelling additions.

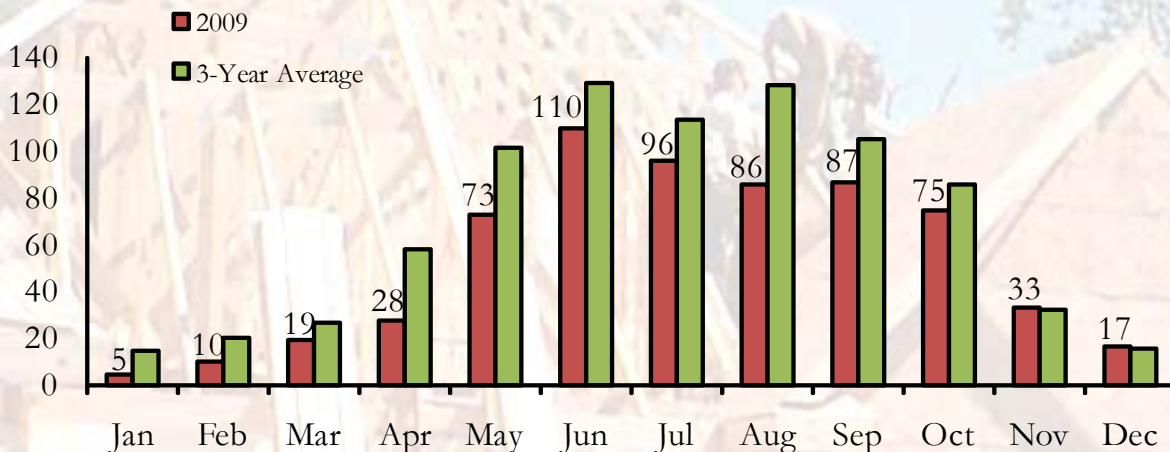
Accessory buildings accounted for 41% of all approved permits in 2009. New construction of single-family dwellings and the placement of mobile homes accounted for 22% of all approved permits. Dwelling additions accounted for 11% of all approved permits. New commercial buildings, additions, and accessory additions accounted for 2% of approved permits.

In 2009, variances accounted for approximately 6% of all permit activity, and Planning Commission applications accounted for approximately 7% of all permit activity.

The adjacent chart is a further breakdown of approved land use permits within the St. Louis County Planning and Development Department's jurisdiction.

Total Approved Permits by Month

2007-2009 (Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)



Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Permit Summary

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

Land Use Permits by Type Total Number 2007-2009

Type	2007	2008	2009	
			#	% of Total
General Land Use Permits				
Single Family Dwelling (0-600 sq. ft.)	25	23	22	3.00%
Single Family Dwelling (>600 sq. ft.)	240	174	139	18.94%
Mobile Home	9	12	4	0.54%
Subtotal	274	209	165	22.48%
Dwelling Addition	115	115	84	11.44%
Subtotal	115	115	84	11.44%
Accessory Building (100-800 sq. ft.)	194	164	131	17.85%
Accessory Building (>800 sq. ft.)	216	192	159	21.66%
Accessory Building Addition	17	16	11	1.50%
Subtotal	427	372	301	41.01%
Commercial Building	15	12	8	1.09%
Commercial Building Addition	7	3	4	0.54%
Commercial Accessory Building	8	4	4	0.54%
Subtotal	30	19	16	2.18%
Deck	40	36	27	3.68%
Sauna	20	18	16	2.18%
Screened Porch	0	0	0	0.00%
Home Occupation	8	5	2	0.27%
Structure Moving/Storage	1	2	4	0.54%
Other (Performance standards, off-site signs, fee-waived, etc.)	9	26	24	3.27%
General Land Use Permit Subtotal	924	802	639	87.06%
Variance Application				
Variances (Planning and Development Department Only)	86	37	44	5.99%
Planning Commission Applications				
Planning Commission Applications	56	39	51	6.95%
Conditional Use Permits (CUP)	28	15	37	5.04%
Plats/Subdivisions	17	12	6	0.82%
Rezoning	6	7	6	0.82%
Land Use/Water Plans	1	0	1	0.14%
Ordinances	4	5	1	0.14%
Environmental Assessment Worksheet	0	0	0	0.00%
Other	0	0	0	0.00%
Total All Permits	1066	878	734	100%

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

Permit Summary

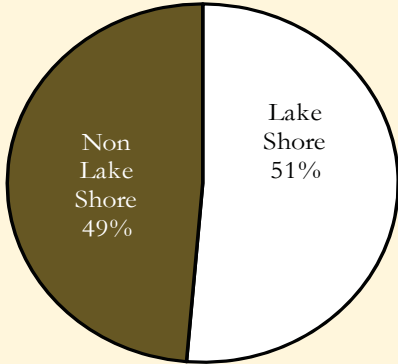
Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

Lakeshore vs. Non-Lakeshore Permits

St. Louis County 2009

(Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)



Of the total approved permits in 2009, 51% were lakeshore-related and 49% were non-lakeshore.

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009



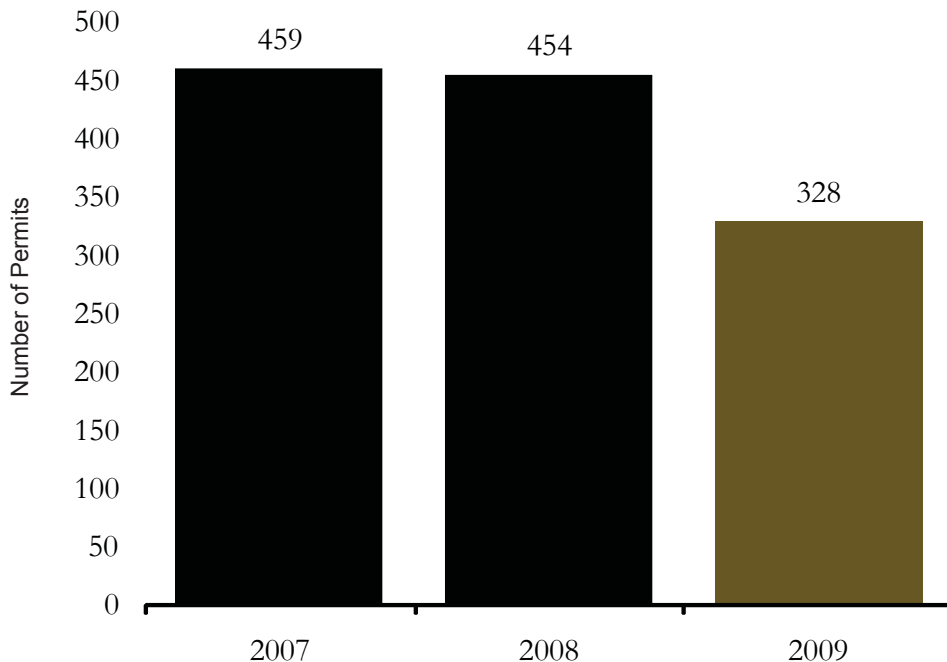
All Permit Activity By Class

By Percent (%) Lakeshore vs. Non-Lakeshore

	2007	2008	2009		
			Number	Percent (%)	Percent (%) Change '07-'09
Non-Lakeshore Permits	50%	43%	311	49%	-2%
Lakeshore Permits	50%	57%	328	51%	2%

Total Lakeshore Approved Permits

2007-2009 (Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)



In 2009, there were 328 approved lakeshore permits. From 2007-2009, St. Louis County averaged 413 approved lakeshore permits per year in county administered areas.

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Permit Summary

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land Use Administration



Development Activity by Lake

Approved Permits 2007-2009

(Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)

Lake	Lake #	# of Permits			
		2007	2008	2009	Total 2007-2009
1. Vermilion	690378	63	73	38	174
2. Burntside	690118	26	26	12	64
3. Island Lake Reservoir	690372	17	25	14	56
4. Whiteface Reservoir	690375	18	15	8	41
5. Ely	690660	13	11	4	28
6. Pelican	690841	14	9	4	27
7. Eagles Nest	690285	-	14	11	25
8. Kabetogama	690845	8	6	9	23
9. Bear Island	690115	9	5	9	23
10. Birch	690003	9	5	3	17
11. Fish Lake Flowage	690491	6	7	2	15
12. Sturgeon	690939	-	4	8	12
13. White Iron	690004	-	5	2	7

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Lake Vermilion had the most permit activity in 2009 with 38 approved permits, and the most permit activity from 2007-2009 with 174 approved permits. Burntside Lake had the second most permit activity in 2009 with 12 approved permits, and the second most permit activity from 2007-2009 with 64 approved permits.

Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Land Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA) Duties

The duties of the St. Louis County Board of Adjustment (BOA) are:

1. To hear requests and make decisions about variances from the county's official controls; and
2. To hear appeals and make administrative decisions relating to county official controls.

The goal of the Land Use Division is to streamline regulatory activities to be more "customer friendly" without sacrificing land use integrity. The Planning and Development Department has offices in Duluth and Virginia.

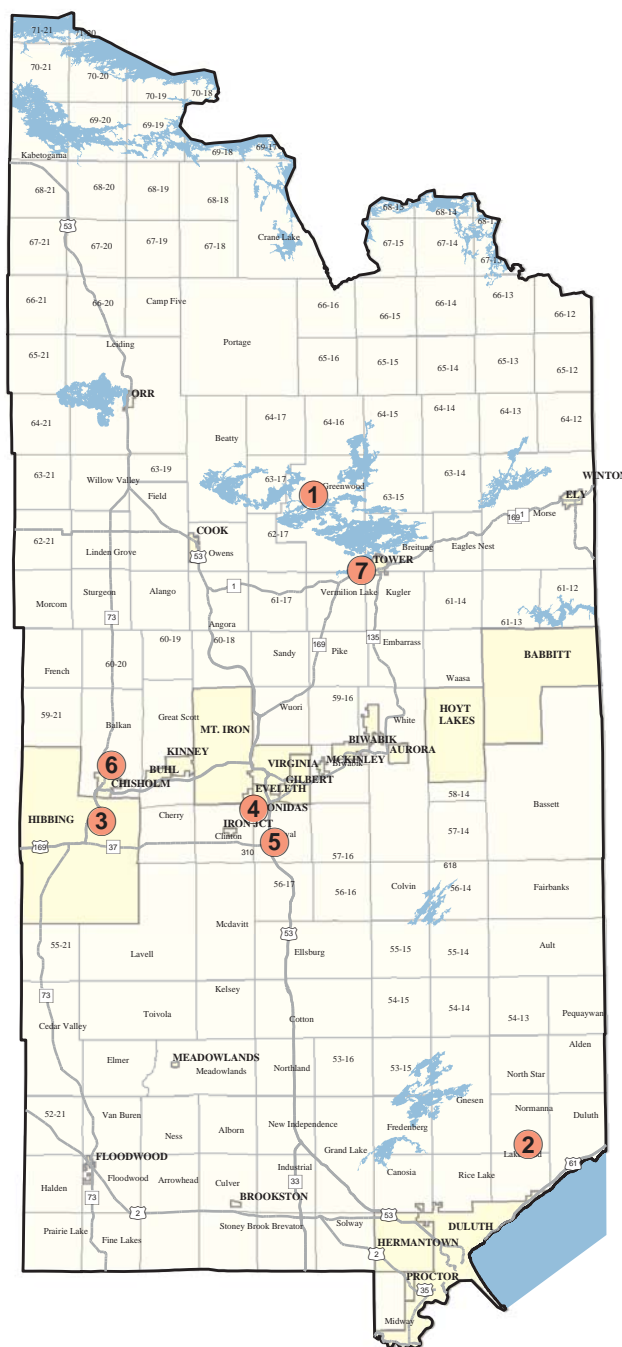
It is impossible to develop official controls with sufficient detail to manage the physical development of land in every circumstance. Allowing variances from official controls is necessary to provide flexibility in the regulatory process when strict enforcement of official controls would be unreasonable and unfair.

The BOA is responsible for providing this flexibility as appropriate without undermining the standards and objectives of the comprehensive plan or the official controls enacted by the county to further the purpose and objectives of its comprehensive plan. The BOA acts as a safety valve for the county, preventing hardship in the application of official controls.

Board of Adjustment (BOA) 2009 Members

1. Marilyn Mueller
2. Angie Dickison Palmer
3. Darlene Majkich
4. Diana Werschay
5. William Coombe
6. Stanley Hendrickson
7. David Pollock

Board of Adjustment (BOA) 2009 Membership Locations



Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land Use Administration

Reasons for Variances

In the past several years, there has been an increase in development pressure on land along and near St. Louis County lakes and streams. This has led to a higher number of variances requested from the BOA. Reasons for variances include:

- Geographic hardship or practical difficulty
- Physical limitations— wetlands, rock outcrops, steep slopes
- Original development occurred prior to the enactment of current land use regulations
- Conversion from seasonal to year round use
- Need for septic updates due to more intensive use
- Nonconformities created when new regulations are enacted
- Small lots in original plats do not prioritize resource protection

Definitions

Variance

Variance means a modification of or variation from official controls.

Official Controls

Official controls are legislatively defined and enacted policies, standards, and other criteria, all of which control the physical development

of a municipality or a county. County official controls typically include zoning ordinances, subdivision controls, and sanitary ordinances.

Variance Applications

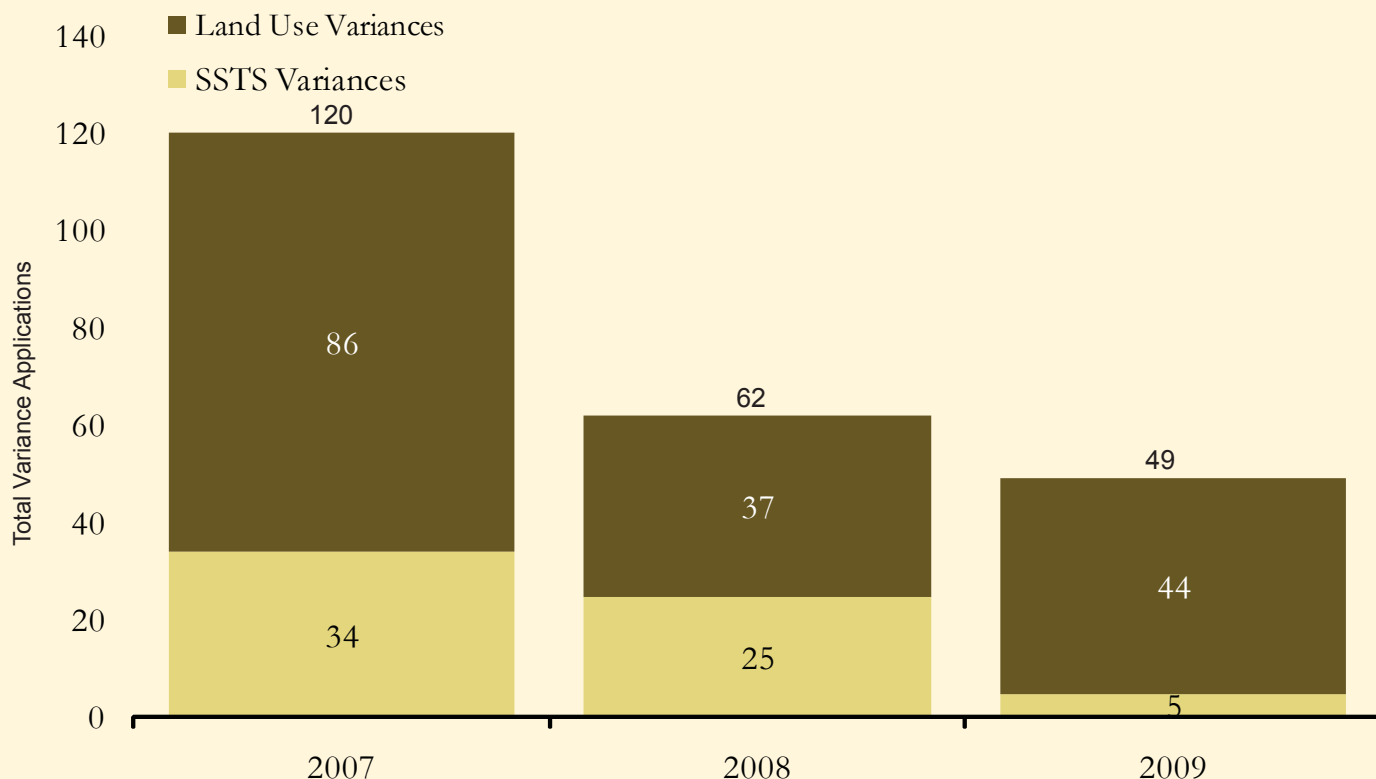
The Board of Adjustment (BOA) reviewed a total of 49 variance applications in 2009. The Planning and Development Department presented 44 variance applications and the Environmental Services Department presented 5 variance applications.

From 2007-2009, the BOA reviewed an average of 75 variance applications per year. Recent revisions to the nonconformities section of the zoning ordinance combined with a depressed economy resulted in fewer applications for variance in 2009.

In 2009, 49 variance applications were reviewed by the BOA. Of those, 10 were denied. It should be noted that some were withdrawn because ordinances had changed or a county staff member provided the applicant with an alternative to the variance requested.

Variance Applications

Planning and Environmental Services
2007-2009



Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Land Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

Lakeshore Variances

A majority of variance applications are related to the development of lakeshore property. In 2009, 46 variance applications, 94%, were related to lake property.

Variance Applications by Type

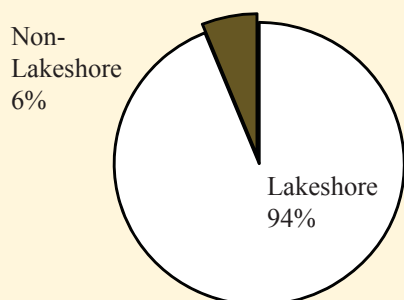
The adjacent chart displays the variance applications by type. Each variance application can have multiple requests for relief from ordinance requirements.

Variance Applications by Month

In 2009, the permit season peaked from July to October. Historically, this is a typical pattern. The number of variance applications is low during the winter months, peak during the late fall and are relatively stable during the remaining months.

Lakeshore Variance Applications 2009

Planning and Environmental Services

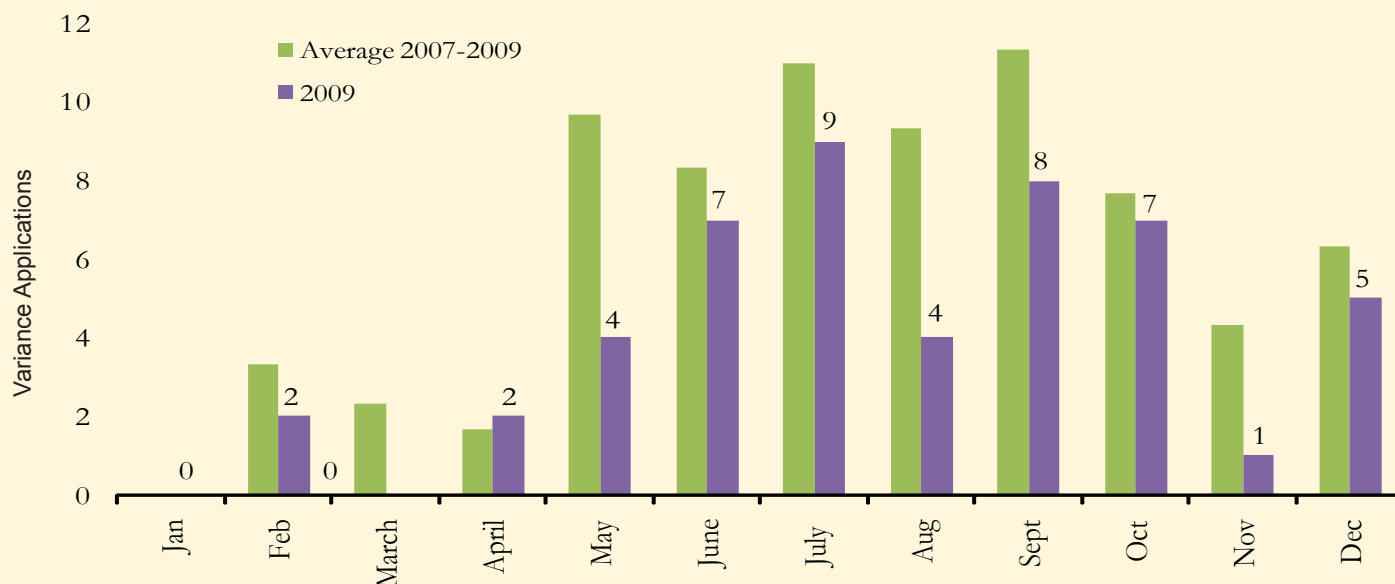


Lakeshore Variance Applications				
Planning and Environmental Services Department Totals by Percent (%)				
	Number			Percent (%) of Total
	2007	2008	2009	
Lakeshore	110	58	46	94%
Non-Lakeshore	10	4	3	6%
Total Requests	120	62	49	100%

Variance Application By Month

Planning and Environmental Services

2007-2009



Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Planning Commission (PC)

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Variance Requests by Type

St. Louis County Planning and Development Department

	2007	2008	2009	Increase or Decrease in Variances 2007-2009
Principal Structures				
Shoreline Setback	22	11	5	↓
Lot Width and/or Area	17	4	2	↓
40% of Lot Width	11	4	5	↑
Side Yard Setback	12	4	4	
Second Principal Structure	1	0	1	↑
Height Limit	17	2	0	↓
Road Setback	13	4	3	↓
Rear Yard	2	0	0	
Bluff	0	1	0	↓
% Lot Coverage	2	2	0	↓
Sub Total	97	32	20	↓
Primary Additions				
Shoreline Setback	11	9	4	↓
Allowable Size Exceeded	10	8	6	↓
Height Limit	0	1	4	↑
Side Yard Setback	5	5	6	↑
One Addition Allowed	0	1	4	↑
40% of Lot Width	13	4	4	
Foundation from Lake	0	0	0	
Road Setback	0	1	3	↑
Sub Total	39	29	31	↑
Accessory Structure				
Shoreline Setback	0	6	5	↓
Road Setback	5	1	5	↑
Size Limit	4	6	4	↓
Side Yard Setback	3	4	5	↑
Rear Lot Line	0	0	1	↑
Second Water Oriented Structure	0	0	0	
Sub Total	12	17	20	↑
Other				
SSTS	34	29	5	↓
Subdivision Platting	0	2	7	↑
Side Lot Line (Accessory Additions)	2	0	0	
Boathouse Size Exceeded	0	0	0	
Exceeding % of Impervious Surface	1	1	0	↓
Appeal of PC Decision	0	0	0	
Sub Total	37	32	12	↓
Total	185	110	83	↓

Planning Commission (PC) Summary

Land Use Administration

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Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission (PC)

Planning Commission Duties

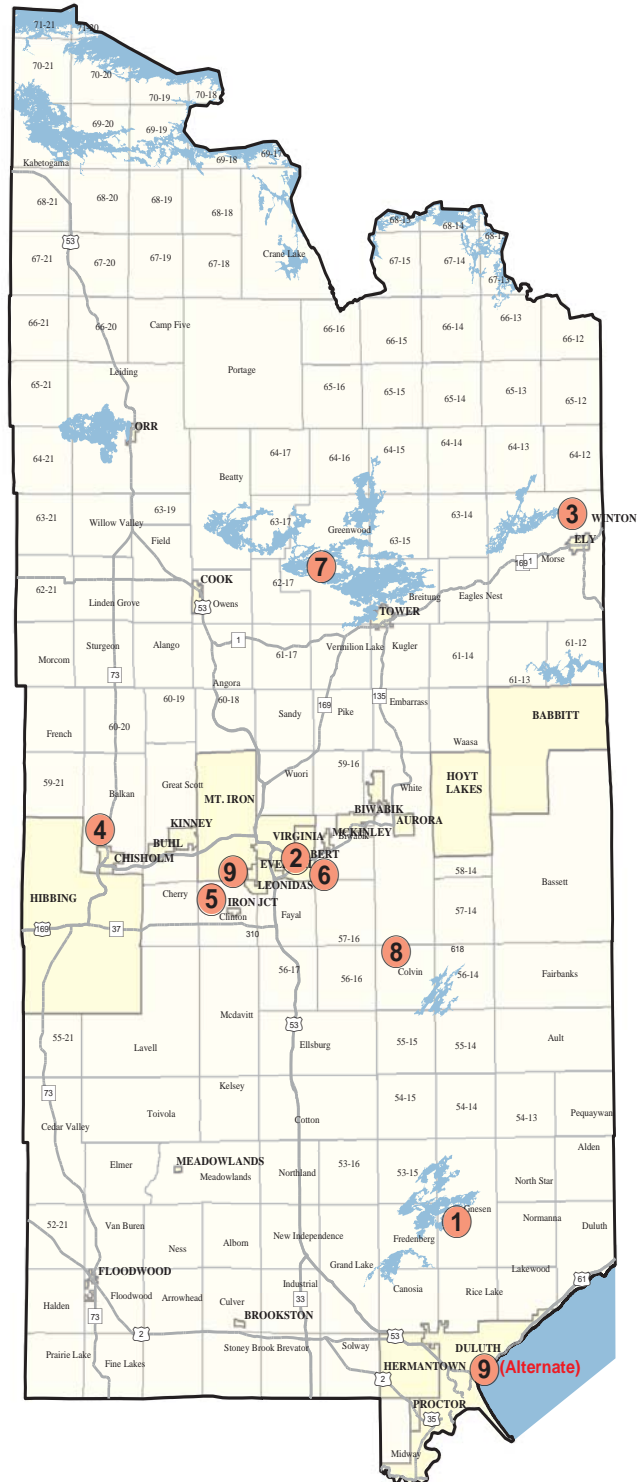
Duties of the St. Louis County Planning Commission (PC) are:

1. To prepare and recommend to the St. Louis County Board of Commissioners a county comprehensive plan and official controls necessary for implementation.
2. To review any comprehensive, land use, or other plans or official controls sent to the county by any local unit of government, council of governments, regional agency, state agency, or federal agency, and to make a report to the County Board.
3. To hold all public hearings required for comprehensive plans, official controls, conditional use permit applications, subdivision platting proposals, amendments to the same, and other matters as prescribed by county ordinance.
4. To review and act upon (i.e., hold a hearing and make the final declaration) all environmental review petitions, worksheets and impact statements that involve conditional uses, subdivision plats or other development proposals.

Planning Commission (PC) 2009 Members

- | | |
|-----|---------------------------|
| 1. | John Lukan |
| 2. | William Coombe |
| 3. | Roger Skraba |
| 4. | Don Nienas |
| 5. | Raymond Svatos |
| 6. | Jack Huhta |
| 7. | Sonya Pineo |
| 8. | Darlene Saumer |
| 9. | Keith Nelson |
| 10. | Alternate: Chris Dahlberg |

Planning Commission (PC) 2009 Membership Locations



Planning Commission (PC) Summary

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Overview of Conditional Use Permits

A conditional use is defined in the county zoning ordinance as a land use or development that would generally not be appropriate without certain restrictions placed upon that use. A review must be conducted to determine if that use is compatible with the county land use plan.

The Planning Commission reviews applications for conditional use permits, subdivision plats, rezonings, and land use plans. These types of applications and proposals have the potential to affect neighbors, the community and the county.

Examples of conditional use applications reviewed by the Planning Commission include campgrounds, gravel pits, resort expansions, planned developments, mini storage operations, and certain types of home based businesses.

All conditional use applications require a public hearing and an inspection by the county. Property owners in the area of the proposed development and the town government receive notice of the public hearing.

Members of the public, as well as local, county, state and federal agencies, may comment on issues of concern. Common concerns discussed during the public hearings include environmental limitations of a site such as wetlands or the ability of property to support sewage treatment; capacity of roads to handle increased development; location of buildings on a property; hours and days of business operation; and controlling waste, dust and noise from a business operation.

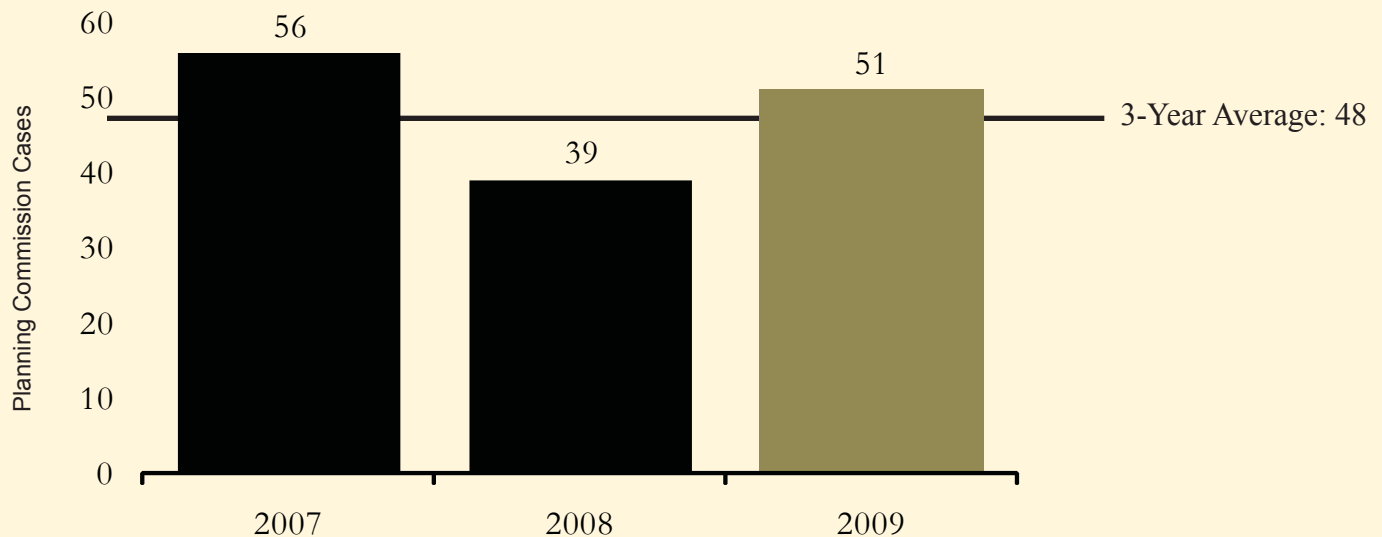
After the close of the public hearing, the Planning Commission makes a decision on the application. The decision may be to approve the application with conditions or it may be to deny the application.

2009 Total Applications & Type

In 2009, the St. Louis County Planning Commission reviewed 51 conditional use applications. This is higher than the 3-year average of 48 applications per year since 2007.

Total Planning Commission Applications

2007-2009



Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development, 2009

Note: Planning Commission applications include all conditional use permits, rezonings, plat/subdivision, land use/water plans, ordinances, EAW, and others.

Planning Commission (PC) Summary

Land Use Administration

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Planning Commission (PC)

Shoreland & Non-Shoreland Areas

Shoreland areas are defined in state law as that area within 1,000 feet of a lake or 300 feet of a river. Shoreland areas have some of the highest property values in the county. They also have some of the most challenging land use and environmental issues.

Non-shoreland areas are lands away from lakes and rivers and development in these areas often presents different but equally significant land use and environmental concerns. Those concerns include impact upon neighbors, legal placement and quality of road access, waste disposal, and noise and dust.

Development proposals in non-shoreland areas tend to be on a larger scale.

Non-shoreland proposals may include gravel pits, manufacturing sites, storage facilities, salvage yards, kennels, churches, and community centers. Non-shoreland development proposals also includes those for home based businesses that could result in a need for a conditional use permit.

Planning Commission Applications by Type

Total Number 2007-2009

Permit Type	2007	2008	2009	
			#	% of Total
Sales and Service	6	5	0	0%
Borrow Pit	6	4	5	9.8%
Resorts/Campground/B&B	3	0	0	0%
Other	3	0	16	37.3%
Rural Industry	1	0	0	0%
Mini-Storage	4	1	3	5.9%
Home-Based Business	0	3	4	7.8%
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	1	0	0	0%
Communication Towers	4	2	9	17.6%
Conditional Use Permits (CUP)	28	15	37	72.5%
Plats/Subdivisions	17	12	6	11.7%
Rezoning	6	7	6	11.7%
Land Use/Water Plans	1	0	1	1.9%
Ordinance	4	5	1	1.9%
Environmental Assessment Worksheet	0	0	0	0%
Other	0	0	0	0%
Total Applications	56	39	51	

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Planning Commission (PC) Summary

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

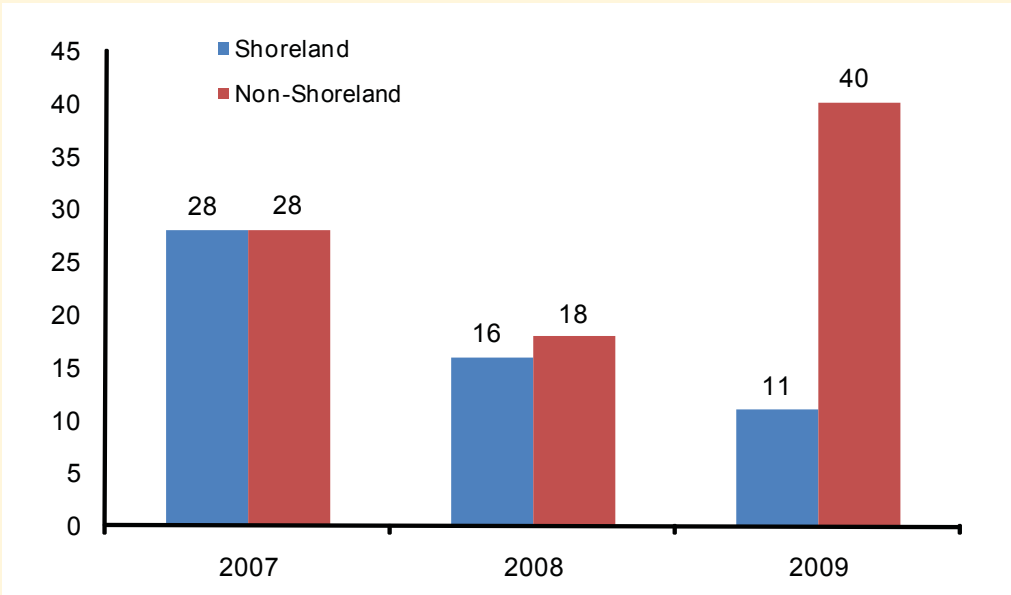
Land Use Administration

Shoreland Applications

In 2009, the Planning Commission reviewed 11 shoreland applications, representing 21% of the total of 51 applications.

In 2009, the Planning Commission reviewed significantly fewer applications related to shoreland in contrast to the previous two years.

Shoreland vs. Non-Shoreland Applications
2007-2009



Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009



Planning Commission (PC) Summary

Land Use Administration

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Planning Commission (PC)

■ Planning Commission Applications by Type

In 2009 there were six preliminary plat applications and one planned development application reviewed by the Planning Commission. Five of the plat requests were approved and one was denied. The planned developments request was approved. The chart below lists the applications that were reviewed.

Planning Commission Applications by Type

Total Number 2009

	Lake Name	Township	Lots	Recorded (Planning Commission Action)
Preliminary Plats Approved				
3-Bays Development Agreement	Vermilion	62-14 & 15 Breitung	150	April
Sellars Beach First Division	South Sturgeon	60-21 French	4	October
Stoney Point Cottages	Superior	51-12 Duluth	8	October
Stuntz Bay Road Addition	Vermilion	62-15 Breitung	2	November
Joan Wasnick Addition	Pequaywan	54-12 Pequaywan	7	December
Plats Denied				
Shores of Low Lake	Low	64-12 Unorganized	6	June
Planned Developments Approved				
Stuntz Bay Townhomes	Vermilion	62-15 Breitung	2	October
Planned Developments Denied				
No Planned Developments denied				

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009

Planning Commission (PC) Summary

Planning Commission (PC)

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

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Land Use Administration

■ Referrals to County Board

The Planning Commission makes recommendations to the County Board about rezonings, subdivision plats, ordinance amendments and land use plans.

In 2009, the St. Louis County Board considered 15 items that were referred from the Planning Commission. Recommended items included; seven rezonings and seven subdivision plats.

Subdivision plat activity was at the same level as in previous years.

Rezoning activity increased by two in 2009, based on the Planning Commission's recommendations.

There was one rezoning denial in 2009.

Planning Commission Referrals to County Board: 2009

					Planning Commission Action	Board Action
Land Use Plans						
1.	Vermilion Plan				November 2008	April 2009
Rezonings						
2.	Pequaywan				January 2009	February 2009
3.	Fredenberg				November 2008	February 2009
4.	Great Scott				January 2009	February 2009
5.	Solway				April 2009	May 2009
6.	Biwabik				June 2009	July 2009
7.	Potlatch (59-21)				July 2009	August 2009
8.	Ness				July 2009	November 2009
Plats		Lake Name	Township	Lots		
9.	Final Approval: Lac Ours	Big Lake	65-13 Unorganized	4	May 2008	April 2009
10.	Final Approval: Golden Gopher	Vermilion	63-17 Unorganized	3	September 2007	June 2009
11.	Final Approval: Pines on Black Bay	Vermilion	63-18 Beatty	8	September 2007	June 2009
12.	Final Approval: Ranta Development	Whiteface	56-14 Unorganized	13	August 2008	October 2009
13.	Final Approval: Makwa Addition	Burntside	63-13 Morse	3	Setember 2008	November 2009
14.	Final Approval: Homer's Lots 1st Addition	Shagawa	63-12 Morse	10	February 2007	December 2009
15.	Final Approval: Joan Wasnick Addition	Pequaywan	54-12 Pequaywan	8	July 2009	December 2009

Source: St. Louis County Planning and Development Department, 2009